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Letter dated 16 August 2017 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith a position paper prepared by the Russian Federation on the modalities for the implementation of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council and include this information in the next biannual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 2231 (2015).

(*Signed*) V. **Nebenzia**

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[Original: English]

Non-paper on issues related to Security Council resolution 2231 (2015)

The Islamic Republic of Iran is a member of the United Nations as well as a member of many multilateral non-proliferation mechanisms, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The actions of the Islamic Republic of Iran are in accordance with international law. There is no legal prohibition on the development by the Islamic Republic of Iran of missile and space programmes, including within the framework of Security Council resolutions.

Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) contains only a call (which is by all means not a prohibition) to refrain from activities related to ballistic missiles that are designed to be capable of carrying nuclear weapons, including launches with the use of ballistic missile technology.

There is no information that Iranian ballistic missiles are specifically designed to carry nuclear weapons. No Security Council Member States, including the authors of the reports on Iranian launches, have submitted any information to the contrary.

In accordance with the conclusion of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Tehran does not possess nuclear weapons, and it does not carry out work on the development thereof. Moreover, there is no evidence of Tehran's deployment of infrastructure for the storage or servicing of nuclear weapons. Such kinds of facilities are certain to be uncovered by national surveillance or intelligence means.

There is also a whole list of specific technical details that experts use in order to identify whether a missile is designed to carry a nuclear weapon. Those details include the presence of a special warhead platform, a nuclear weapon guidance system and a device preventing unsanctioned access to the nuclear weapon.

The Iranian Simorgh is a space launch vehicle, namely, a rocket designed to deliver a payload to circumterrestrial orbit or outer space. That is why, from the technical point of view, it is clear that it cannot be designed specifically to deliver nuclear weapons, and it does not therefore fall under item 3 of annex B of resolution 2231 (2015).

As in several de facto similar reports provided by some Member States on Iranian missile launches, the document dated 2 August 2017 does not provide technical evidence on the Simorgh missile launch conducted on 27 July 2017, in particular proof of its capability to deliver nuclear weapons. The document is based upon speculations and attempts to once again review the scope and character of procedures established by resolution 2231 (2015).

It is worth recalling that no prohibition on cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran on missile-related items is in existence. Resolution 2231 (2015) set an arrangement that provides for the approval of the Security Council for transfers to the Islamic Republic of Iran of items included in the missile-related control list in document S/2015/546 and items that States believe can be used to create means for the delivery of nuclear weapons.

Given that the missile and outer space programmes of the Islamic Republic of Iran are not linked to nuclear weapons and are not covered by resolution 2231 (2015), the request of some Member States to the Secretary-General to provide a detailed and comprehensive report on Iranian activities in missile and outer space-related areas is not well-founded. Such a request could only be sent to the Secretary-General through a Security Council decision.

The Russian Federation would also like to underline that regional political matters are not a part of the mandate of resolution 2231 (2015).

The Russian Federation is under the impression that someone is artificially blaming the Islamic Republic of Iran with regard to its space launch vehicle and is trying to create circumstances that would force the Security Council to impose sanctions against Tehran. There are no grounds for such action yet.